

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 490.

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1863.

PRICE 1*d.*

A ROMANCE OF A NON-COMBATANT.

THE rare gratification of following a campaign without the hazard of fighting was enjoyed by the present writer during a great part of the years 1861, 1862. There arose a demand in the Atlantic American cities for correspondents to take the field on behalf of the great daily journals, and the management of the *New York Herald* tendered me a position upon their Potomac army staff.

I find that the *Herald* is held in Europe, as in America, to be the Ishmael of the press; but with its opinions I had nothing to do. The *Herald* has made a reputation, not for its sentiments, but in despite of them. As a newspaper, it stands deservedly high. It paid me well, restricted me in nothing, and left me free to write at discretion. I lay near Washington a month or two, experimenting with horses. After much parleying with negroes, and bargaining with country-people, I heard that a certain 'Mayor' Bragg kept some fair animals; and when I stated my business at his house, he opened negotiations after a fashion immemorial in the South, by producing whisky.

When Mayor Bragg had asked me pertinently if I knew much about the 'pints of a hoss,' and 'what figger in the way of price' would suit me, he told an erudite negro, named 'Jeems,' to trot out the black colt. The black colt made his appearance by vaulting over a gate, and playfully shivering a panel of fence with his 'off' hoof; then he executed a flourish with his tail, leaped thrice in the air, and bit savagely at the man Jeems. When I asked Mayor Bragg if the black colt was sufficiently gentle to stand fire, he replied that he was gentle as a lamb, and offered to put me astride him. I had no sooner taken my seat, however, than the black colt neighed, backed, 'shied,' stood erect, and finally ran away.

Our Washington agent, hearing of my difficulties, eventually sent me a beast, and in compliment to what the animal might have been, I suppose, he called the same a horse. I wish to protest, in this record, against any such misnomer. The creature possessed no single equine element. Experience has satisfied me that horses stand upon four legs; the 'horse' in question stood upon three. Horses may either pace, trot, run, or gallop; mine made all these four movements simultaneously. I

think I may call his gait an 'eccentric stumble.' That he had endurance, I grant, for he survived perpetual beating; and his beauty might have been admitted by an anatomist, though it was scouted by the superficial observer. I asked ruefully if I was expected to go into battle thus mounted, but was peremptorily forbidden so to endanger a valuable property. Accompanied by Glumley, an artist, equally unaccustomed to horse-exercise, I started for Hunter's Mills, twenty-seven miles distant. Glumley rode upon the neck of his beast, and when he attempted to deceive me with a smile, his face was horribly contorted. We reached Chainbridge, passed the remotest fort, and fell into the wake of wagons on the Leesburg turnpike. The country was wild; the farms desolate. I came to one dwelling where some perfidious Vandal had even forced out the window-frames, and perilled his neck to tear down the roof-beams; a dead vulture was pinned over the door by broken bayonets, and a horse, which had expired near by, was facetiously propped up in the lawn. So ghastly a spectacle I never beheld.

Darkness closed solemnly about me, with seven miles of the journey yet to be accomplished; and as, at eight o'clock, I turned into a lonesome by-road, full of ruts, pools, and quicksands, a feeling of great uneasiness began to possess me. Owls hooted in the depth of the woods, and wild pigs, darting across the road, went crashing into the bushes. The phosphorescent bark of a blasted tree glimmered on a neighbouring knoll, and as I halted at a rivulet to water my beast, a solitary star floated down the ripples. Presently I came upon a 'clearing,' where the moonlight shone through the rents of a crumbling dwelling, and from the far distance broke the faint howl of farm-dogs. At last, climbing a stony hill, the skies lay beneath me, reddening with the flame of camps, and at ten o'clock I reached the head-quarters of Colonel Tagger, commanding a regiment of Pennsylvania reserves. The men were dozing upon the sloppy ground, round fagot-fires, and the colonel was asleep in a wagon. He greeted me warmly, and directed the cook to prepare a supper of coffee and fried pork. Too hungry to feel the chafing of my sores, I fell to the oleaginous repast with my teeth and fingers, and having eaten ravenously, asked to be shewn to my apartments. These consisted of a covered wagon, already occupied by four teamsters, and a blanket which savoured

strongly of horse. A man named Coggle, being nudged by the colonel, and requested to take other quarters, asked dolorously if it was time to turn out, and roared 'woe!' as if he had some consciousness of being kicked. When I asked for a pillow, the colonel laughed, and I had an intuition that the man Coggle was looking at me in the darkness with intense disgust. The colonel said that he had once put a man in the guardhouse for placing his head on a snowball. He recommended me not to catch cold if I could help it, but said that people in camp commonly caught several colds at once; and added grimly, that his 'orderly' had ground a sabre down to the nice edge of a razor, and could be made to shave me in the morning.

There were cracks in the bottom of the wagon, through which cold drafts came like knives, and I was allotted a space four feet in length by three feet in width. Being six feet high, my relation to these procrustean quarters was most embarrassing, and I doubled up like an armadillo. The man next to me snored very loudly, and I adopted the brilliant idea of making a pillow of his thigh, which answered my best expectations. I was aroused after a while by what I thought to be the violent hands of this person, but found to my chagrin that Glumley insisted upon dividing my place with me. I had a general sensation in the morning of being cut off at the knees. Through the good offices of General McCall, I obtained a blue roan horse, of famous size and strength, and he ordered my Rozinante to be taken away and split up (perhaps) for kindling wood. The blue roan exhibited frequent intentions of breaking my neck, but as I generally kept my seat, and abandoned my rein for the pommel of my saddle, I gained the reputation of being a dashing equestrian. Being attired in civil gray, and in request at head-quarters, a rumour was developed and gained currency that I was attached to the division in the capacity of a scout. Whenever my horse became unmanageable, therefore, his speed was accelerated by the cheers of soldiers, and I became an object of great interest. Glumley was even less fortunate, since, having confused ideas of the freedom of the press and the law of confiscation, he appropriated a farmer's stray nag, and was reported thereupon to the provost-marshall.

For three weeks I rode up and down London county, making the acquaintance of citizens and their families, and accompanying all manner of foraging expeditions, reconnaissances, and forays. At Alexandria, I was imprudent enough to anticipate some military movements in print, and to escape arrest, I embarked at Baltimore for Fortress Monroe. The boat was packed with coffins, embalmers of bodies, liquor-barrels, recruiting sergeants and their squads, young officers and their wives, and a legion of Hebrew sutlers. Supper was spread in a spacious fore-cabin, and at the signal to assemble, the men rushed to the table like so many beasts of prey. A captain opposite me bolted a whole mackerel in a twinkling, and spread the half-pound of butter that was to have supplied the entire vicinity upon a single slice of bread. A soldier beside me reached his fork across my neck, and plucked a young chicken bodily, which he ate, to the great disquiet of a dozen others, who had intended to do the same thing. A waiter advanced with some steak, but before he reached the table, a couple of Zouaves dragged it from the tray, and laughed brutally at their success. Among the passengers were a young major and his bride. She had been married but a few days, and had obtained permission to accompany him to Old Point. She looked very pretty in travelling-hat and flowing robes, and during the evening, she and her husband accompanied another lady at the piano. The ballad was a popular version of *Gay and Happy*, and the twain sang the

stanzas alternately, while the whole concourse of civil and military spectators swelled the chorus:

Then let the South sing aloft what it will,
We are for the Union still!
For the Union, for the Union,
We are for the Union still.

The reserve being broken, the major followed with the *Star-spangled Banner*, and the refrain must have called up the mermaids. Dancing ensued, and a soldier volunteered a hornpipe. I thought of the sad uncertainties of the time, as I watched the glee, and strolled upon deck to enjoy a pipe. It was weird to mark the glitter of sea-lights, the sweep of belated gulls, the passing hulls with grinning topmast lamps, the flap of fishes caught in the skeins of moonlight. Through the gray of the morning, I made out the spars of Hampton Roads, as thickly entangled as in the pool of the Thames, and at nine o'clock landed within a few rods of the famous *Monitor*.

It is foreign to the purpose of this article to detail the thousand and one incidents in which I bore a part during the siege of Yorktown and the subsequent advance upon Richmond. For ever mingled with the ghastly and the terrible were droll occurrences, characteristic of the combatants and the informal nature of the fighting. I lost my horse one night by sleeping out of camp-limits, and but for the friendly offices of a Virginian, whose hospitality I had accepted, I might have done worse by involuntarily riding him into Richmond.

A calamity which befell me after the celebrated battle of Fair Oaks, well illustrates the perils of the non-combatant. General J. E. B. Stuart made at this time his first and most famous raid; it was on the 13th of June 1862. The Federal forces were divided into five corps, and four of these lay upon the south side of the Chickahominy river, the fifth upon the north side. Our right rested upon Mechanicsville, four miles from Richmond; and our left upon White Oak Swamp, fourteen miles from Richmond. Both flanks were open, and the left was a day's march from the right. A few horsemen only were picketed across the long reach of country from Mechanicsville to Hanover Court-house, and we were drawing our supplies by railway from 'White House,' on the Pamunkey, twenty miles in the rear. The railway was unguarded, and only five companies of infantry protected the grand dépôt. I would like McClellan's biographer to remember this reckless position, when he comes to extol the far-sighted prudence of the 'Young Napoleon.'

On the day of Stuart's raid, I had ridden to the dépôt with dispatches, and returned. As I was reining up at a farmhouse gate, to enter and refresh, my name was called by a passing horseman. I recognised Captain Baillie of New York, once a city reporter, but now transformed into a tall, hardy, courageous cavalry-man.

'Would you like to join a scouting-party?' said he.

'Which way?'

'Beyond the right, on the Old Church road.' I forgot my wearied horse, and the restrictions imposed by head-quarters upon correspondents. It was enough to know that an adventure might ensue, and possibly incidents of grave importance. We came to the regiment at Old Cold Harbour, an insignificant country inn, where the nags were being watered at a windlass well. The major commanding was a thick, sunburned man, with grizzled beard, and as we rounded a corner of hilly road, his voice rang out: 'At-tien-tion! Pre-pare to mount!'

Every rider sprang to his nag; every nag walked instinctively to his place; every horseman made fast his girths, strapped his blankets tightly, and laid his hands upon bride rein and pommel.

'At-tien-tion! Mount!'

The riders vaulted to their seats ; the buglers blew a lively strain ; the nags pricked up their ears ; and the long array moved briskly forward, with the captain, the major, and myself at the head. Our road wound in the rear of the extreme right position of the army, and led toward the north-west. In a very few minutes we passed the district of tents and wagons, and entering a wood, lost, after half a mile, even the hum and halloo of camps. I saw by the few tracks in the clay that no large bodies of men had passed before us, and the farmhouses which we noticed were inhabited by anxious, timid people, who flattened their noses against the window-panes, and maintained a general ghastliness of face. The major was engaged with a cigar, and lost no words in courtesy. Captain Baillie had introduced me, and the favour had been acknowledged by the old trooper with one eye and a grunt.

After some time, he looked at my horse with both eyes, and said curtly : 'Where did you hist that nag ?'

I explained that a correspondent had previously been the proprietor, but that he had not accounted to me for the origin of the creature.

'Spose he froze to it !' exclaimed the major.

Here he lit another cigar, and examined one of the long, awkward revolvers in his holster. I asked, modestly, if he sometimes read the paper to which I was attached.

'Never read any paper,' he said—'they lie so ! Never read one since the Mexican war, in '47. They lied two men below me to captaincies, and lied me out of my promotion. If I see a man in my regiment read a newspaper, I know him at once to be a bad soldier. Never had but one deserter in nine years ; I shot him dead as "get out." He was a confirmed newspaper reader. Spoils soldiers—makes 'em ornary. One feller in company "G" actually reading newspaper last week on scout. If I wouldn't ha' shot him, cashier me ! but colonel in command thought otherwise. That man's been under guard ever since !'

The captain, who had been some time in the rear, now returned with a man named Otho, a first-sergeant, tall, broad-shouldered, and powerful of limb. He had been in the Prussian service, and was held in great esteem by the officers of the regiment, with whom, indeed, he maintained the bearing of an equal. He wore the blue Federal cavalry jacket, trimmed with yellow, but his spurs were of the Mexican pattern, cruelly bladed, and hung with tiny bells, that jingled as he rode. His moustache was twisted and curled, and he balanced his hat jauntily on the side of his head. He saluted promptly, and spoke with a strong German accent.

'You haf to talk vid me, major ?'

'Take twelve of the best horsemen,' said the old trooper ; 'diverge from the regiment at the church, and reconnoitre the road before and on both sides of the troop.'

The blue eyes of the German brightened ; he twisted his moustache till it lifted his lip and revealed his keen teeth.

'You gif to me, major, te leetle sqaud, to do vat I shoose wid dem ?'

'To do your duty with them,' said the major snapishly, for he disliked foreigners, and gave them every advantage for having their heads blown off.

The man Otho, with his sabre at his shoulder, rode down the line, and indicated at various points the men that he required. As these filed by the column at a gallop, the major looked at them successively. 'Good eye that Dutchman has got,' said he—'every man a regular American.'

We proceeded in this way for three miles, the sergeant's squad keeping well in front ; but when we arrived at Old Church—an insignificant place of worship, with some dwellings close by—they had

disappeared. Here the main body halted, while the major rode back to the two other battalions, to confer and communicate with their majors. The captain came over to me, holding a revolver by the barrel.

'Take this,' he said, 'for I see that you are without arms.' I looked ruefully at him and the weapon. I had no holsters, and my saddle-bags were inconvenient. So I told him courteously that it could be of no possible use to me, for I certainly could hit nothing, and might accidentally disfigure myself. The men were now all looking at the tubes of their carbines, and the officers were gazing anxiously down an intersecting road. All at once a cloud of dust announced something approaching, and we were joined in a moment by two pieces of flying artillery and five fresh companies of cavalry. In a moment more we were again in motion, galloping due northward, and, as I surmised, toward Hanover Court-house.

If any branch of the military service is feverish, adventurous, and exciting, it is that of the cavalry. One's heart beats as fast as the hoof falls. There is no music like the winding of the bugle, and no monotone so full of meaning as the clink of sabres, rising and falling with the dashing pace. Horse and rider become one—a new race of Centaurs—and the charge, the stroke, the crack of carbines, are so quick, vehement, and dramatic, that we seem to be watching a joust in the tournament, and following fierce Saladins and Crusaders again. We had ridden two hours at a fair canter, when we came to a small stream that crossed the road obliquely, and gurgled away through a sandy valley into the deep woods. A cart-track, half obliterated, here diverged, running parallel with the creek, and the major held up his sword as a signal to halt ; at the same moment, the bugler blew a quick shrill note.

'There are hoof-marks here !' grunted the major—'five of 'em. The Dutchman has gone into the thicket. Halloo !' he added—'there go the carbines !'

I heard clearly two explosions in rapid succession, then a general discharge, as of several persons firing at once, and at last five continuous reports, fainter but more regular, and like the several emptyings of a revolver. I had scarcely time to note these things, and the effect produced upon the troop, when strange noises came from the woods to the right—the floundering of steeds, the cries and curses of men, and the ringing of steel striking steel. The boughs crackled, the leaves quivered, and a horse and rider plunged into the road, not five rods from my feet. The man was bare-headed, and his face and clothing were torn with briars and branches. He was at first riding fairly upon our troop, when he beheld the uniform and standards, and with a sharp oath flung up his sword and hands.

'I surrender !' he said ; 'I give in. Don't shoot !'

The scores of carbines that were levelled upon him at once dropped to their rests at the saddles ; but some unseen avenger had not heeded the shriek : a ball whistled from the woods, and the man fell from his cushion like a stone. In another instant, the German sergeant bounded through the gap, holding his sabre aloft in his right hand ; but the left hung stiff and shattered at his side, and his face was deathly white. He glared an instant at the dead man by the roadside, leered grimly, and called aloud : 'Come on, major ! dis way ! Dere is a sqaud of dem ahead !'

The bugle at once sounded a charge ; the major rose in the stirrups, and thundered 'Forward !' I reined aside intuitively, and the column dashed hotly past me. With a glance at the heap of mortality littering the way, I spurred my nag sharply, and followed hard behind. The riderless horse seemed to catch the fever of the moment, and closed up with me, leaving his master the solitary tenant of the dell. For perhaps three miles, we galloped like the wind,

and my brave little traveller overtook the hindmost of the troop, and retained the position. Thrice there were discharges ahead. I caught glimpses of the major, the captain, and the wolfish sergeant far in advance, and once saw, through the cloud of dust that beset them, the pursued and their individual pursuers turning the top of a hill. But for the most part I saw nothing; I *felt* all the intense, consuming ardour of the time and the event. I thought that my hand clutched a sabre, and despised myself that it did not do so; I stood in the stirrups, and held some invisible enemy by the throat; the bloodiness of the chase was upon me. I realised the fierce infatuation of matching life with life, and standing arbiter upon my fellow's body. It seemed but a moment when we halted, red and panting, in the paltry court-house village of Hanover. The field-pieces hurled a few shells at the escaping Confederates, and the men were ordered to dismount.

A Confederate picket had been occupying the village. Two of the man Otho's party had been slain in the woods, where also lay as many Southerners.

Hanover Court-house is renowned as the birthplace of Patrick Henry, the colonial orator, called by Byron, 'the forest Demosthenes.' In a little tavern opposite the old court-house building, he began his eminent career, as a measurer of gills to convivialities; and in the court-house—a small stone edifice, plainly but quaintly constructed—he gave the first exhibitions of his matchless eloquence. Not far away, on a byroad, the more recent, but not less famous orator, Henry Clay was born. The region adjacent to his father's was called the 'Slashes of Hanover,' and thence came his appellation of the 'Mill-boy of the Slashes.' I had often longed to visit these shrines, but never dreamed that the booming of cannon would announce me. The soldiers broke into both the tavern and the court-house, and splintered some chairs in the former to obtain relics of Henry.

I secured Richmond newspapers of the same morning, and also some items of intelligence; with these I decided to repair at once to the mail-boat at White House, and formed the rash determination of taking the direct or Pamunkey road, which I had never travelled, and which might be beset by Confederates. The distance to White House by this course was only twenty miles, whereas it was nearly as far to headquarters, and I believed that my horse had still the persistence to carry me thither. It was now past four o'clock, but I thought to ride six miles an hour while daylight lasted, and by good-luck reach the dépôt at eight. The major said that it was foolhardiness; the captain bantered me to go; I turned my back upon both, and bade them good-bye.

While daylight remained, I had little reason to repent my wayward resolve. The Pamunkey lay to my left, and the residences between it and the road were of a better order than others that I had seen. This part of the country had not been overrun, and the wheat and young corn were waving in the river-breeze. I saw few negroes, but the porches were frequently occupied by women and white men, who looked wonderingly toward me. The hills of King William County were but a little way off, and through the wood that darkened them, sunny glimpses of parti-coloured fields and dwellings now and then appeared. At six o'clock I came to a shabby settlement, called New Castle, where an evil-looking man walked out from a frame-house, and inquired the meaning of the firing at Hanover. I explained hurriedly, as some of his neighbours meantime gathered round me. They asked if I was not a soldier in the Yankee army, and as I rode away, followed me suspiciously with their eyes, and wagged their heads. To end the matter, I spurred my pony, and soon galloped out of sight. Henceforward, I met only stern, surprised glances, and seemed to read murder in the faces of the inhabitants. A wide creek crossed the road about five miles

further on, where I stopped to water my horse. The shades of night were now gathering; there was no moon, and for the first time I realised the loneliness of my position. Hitherto, adventure had laughed down fear; hereafter, my mind was to be darkened like the gloaming, and peopled with ghastly shadows.

I was yet young in the experience of death, and the toppled corpse of the slain cavalry-man somehow haunted me. I heard his hoof-falls chiming with my own, and imagined, with a cold thrill, that his steed was still following me. Then his white, rigid face and uplifted arms menaced my way, and at last the ruffianly form of his slayer pursued him along the wood. They glided like shadows over the foliage, and flashed across the surfaces of pools and rivulets. I heard their steel ringing in the under-brush, and so they flitted round me, pursuing and retreating, till my brain began to whirl with the motion. Suddenly my horse stumbled, and I reined him to a halt. The cold drops were standing on my forehead; I found my knees quiver, and my breathing convulsive. With an expletive upon my unmanliness, I touched the nag with my heel, and whistled encouragingly. Poor pony! fifty miles of almost uninterrupted travel had broken his spirit. He leaped into his accustomed pace, but his legs were unsteady, and he floundered at every bound. There were pools, ruts, and boughs across the way, with here and there stretches of slippery 'corduroy'; but the thick blackness concealed these, and I expected momentarily to be thrown from the saddle. By and by, he dropped from a canter into a rack, from a rack to an amble, then into a walk, and finally to a slow painful limp. I dismounted, and took him perplexedly by the bit. A light shone from the window of a dwelling across some open fields to the left, and I thought of repairing thither, but presently some deep-mouthed dogs began to bay, and then the lamp went out. A tiny stream sang at the roadside, flowing towards some deeper tributary. Lighting a cigar, I contrived by its fitful illuminations to wash the limbs of my jaded nag; then I led him for an hour, till my own limbs were weary; I was troubled, too, by weird imaginings, doubts, and regrets. When I resumed the saddle, the horse had a firmer step, and walked pleasantly. I ventured, after a time, to incite him to a trot, and was going satisfactorily forward, when a deep voice, that almost took my breath, called from the gloom: 'Who comes there? Halt, or I fire! Guard, turn out!'

Directly, the road was full of men, and a bull's-eye lantern flashed upon my face. A group of foot-soldiers, with drawn pistols and sabres, gathered round me, and I heard the neigh of steeds from some imperceptible vicinity.

'Who is it, sergeant?' said one.

'Is there but one of 'em?' said another.

'Confound him!' said a third; 'I was having a right peart snooze.'

'Who are yeon?' said the sergeant sternly. 'What are yeon deoun' eout at this hour o' the night? Are yeon a reb-bil?'

'No!' I answered, greatly relieved. 'I am a newspaper correspondent of Smith's division; and there's my pass.'

I was taken over to a place in the woods where some fagots were smouldering, and stirring them to a blaze, the sergeant read the document, and pronounced it right.

'Yeoun hain't got no business, nevertheless, to be roamin' areound, outside o' picket; but seein' as it's yeoun, I reckon yeoun may trot along.'

I offered to exchange my information for a biscuit and a drop of coffee, for I was well-nigh wearied out. While one of the privates produced a canteen more wholesome than cleanly, another gave me a lump of fat pork and a piece of corn-bread. They gathered sleepily about me, while I told of the scount; and the sergeant said that my individual ride was 'game

enough, but nawthing but darn nonsense.' Then they fed my horse with a trifle of oats, and after a while I climbed, stiff and bruised, to the saddle again, and bade them good-night.

In a short time, I came to familiar landmarks. A blacksmith's shop, and a few miserable cabins clustering about it, were besieged with teamsters, going to and returning from the supply dépôt at White House. Two roads diverged from this point to the Pamunkey, and while I was debating which of them to take, I was attracted by some unwonted confusion in my rear. A mounted officer dashed past me, shouting some unintelligible tidings, and he was followed in quick succession by a dozen cavalry-men, who rode as if the foul fiend was at their heels. Then came a teamster, barebacked, whose rent harness trailed in the road; and directly some wagons that were halted before the blacksmith's, wheeled smartly, and rattled off toward White House.

'What is the matter, my man?' I said to one of these lunatics hurriedly.

'The rebels are behind!' he screamed, with white lips, and vanished. I thought that it might be as well to take some other road, and so struck off in the direction of a new landing at Putney's or Garlic. At the same instant, I heard the crack of carbines behind, and they had a magical influence upon my speed. I rode along a stretch of chestnut and oakwood, attached to the famous Webb estate, and when I came to a rill that passed by a little bridge under the way, turned up its sandy bed, and buried myself in the underbrush. A few breathless moments only had intervened, when the roadway seemed shaken by a hundred hoofs. The imperceptible horsemen yelled like a war-party of Camanches, and when they had passed, the carbines rang ahead, as if some bloody work was being done at every rod.

I remained a full hour under cover, after which I sallied forth and kept the route to Garlic, with ears erect, and expectant pulses. I had gone but a quarter of a mile, when I discerned through the gloom a black, misshapen object standing in the middle of the road. As it seemed motionless, I ventured nearer, and the mystery was resolved into a sutler's wagon charred and broken, and still smoking from the incendiary's torch. Further on, more of these burned wagons littered the way, and at one place two slain horses lay at the roadside. When I emerged upon the Hanover road, sounds of shriek and shot issued from the landing at Garlic, and flames arose from the woody shores of the Pamunkey. I knew by the gliding blaze that vessels had been fired and set adrift, and could see the devouring element climbing rope and shroud. In a twinkling, a second light appeared behind the woods to my right, and the intelligence dawned upon me that the cars and station at Tunstall's, a railway settlement, had been also lit. By the fitful illumination, I picked my way in its direction, and, as I conjectured, the dépôt and train were luridly consuming. The vicinity was marked by wrecked teams, the embers of wagons, and toppled steeds. I found the greatest confusion existing at White House: sutlers were taking down booths, transports were slipping their cables, steamers moving down the stream; the few companies constituting the garrison were drawn up in line, and the decks of the gunboats cleared for action. Groups of frightened people were listening to the stories of the fugitives, and I understood from these that a large body of cavalry, accompanied by artillery, had suddenly appeared at Old Church, attacked, and killed or captured the picket, and continued their raid to Tunstall's, sabring, shooting, and burning at every step. While the panic was at its height, a regiment of Illinois cavalry galloped to the landing, and demanded the whereabouts of the forayers. Opinion differed; some conjectured that they had

crossed the Pamunkey at Garlic, swimming their horses; others, that they had gone back by Hanover Court-house; others, that they were secreted in the woods at Black Creek, and would pounce upon the dépôt at dawn. While these conflicting rumours were passed from man to man, and lights were darting here and there, amid uproar, perplexity, and dread, a shrill whistle broke from the wood a little way above, and a great fiend's eye flashed down the railway. With a whoop and a crash, a train and engine halted at the very brink of the river, and the throng of foot and horse broke for the crowded cars. The wordy debate changed to chill, silent awe, when three dead bodies were passed from the open platforms to the ground; then several wounded persons were removed, and when they had been taken from the spot, the clamour recommenced. The people upon the train only knew that, as they were slackening speed above Tunstall's, at a deep cutting through a hill, a party of horsemen appeared on the bank above, and discharged their carbines. The freight was mainly composed of unarmed civil and military idlers, all of whom might have been murdered, but that the engineer retained his presence of mind, placed the locomotive under full steam, and escaped with trifling loss.

But who were these fierce and ubiquitous horsemen? All looked amazedly, gasping the interrogatory with pale lips. Flitting to and fro like shadows, leaving ghosts and corpses behind—shrieking, slaying, disappearing; some race of demons must be abroad to wreak revenges upon men.

'There they go!' shouted a voice from the river, and all eyes looked up. A sailor in the top-mast of a transport beheld another light flaring in the south, and in a moment it reddened the whole horizon.

'They are at Baltimore Cross Roads,' hissed a man in my ear. 'By heavens, they are making the circuit of the entire army.'

The strange confusion increased; the steamers on the river whistled and rang alarm-bells; the negroes at the contraband quarters gathered in groups, and jabbered barbarous prayers; one of the gunboats fired a signal-gun that seemed to split the sky; the whole horizon was afire. The hulks at Garlic continued to drift, burning to the water's edge.

'Forward!' shouted the cavalry leader, and the dark masses of horsemen wheeled, with flashing sabres, and clattering spurs and scabbards.

It did not seem to me that White House was a good haven under the circumstances; so I fell in with the hindmost battalion, and scampered excitedly off. An hour's fierce riding brought us to Baltimore Cross Roads—three or four houses and a post-office—where we found some embers of wagons and commissary stores. Corn lay by the road-side in heaps, where the foragers had refreshed and fed their horses. Here, as elsewhere, they had taken off nags, negroes, and whites, without regard to sex or rank. They had vanished in the direction of New Kent Court-house, and there remained little doubt that they intended to escape across some of the lower Chickahominy bridges. But inquiry developed the facts, that they had three field-pieces, and numbered at least three thousand sabre-men. A negro was discovered, after searching the vicinity, concealed under a cabin. He was dumb with fear, and could by neither threat nor persuasion be made to speak. He produced a scrap of paper, however, which he tendered to a major of battalion. The major called for a lantern, and read the missive, at first in silence, afterward aloud.

'Colonel Fitzhugh Lee's compliments to the Federal commander at White House. Regrets that he cannot for the present tarry longer.'

Curses deep and numerous were elicited by the reading.

'That's the scoundrel whose property we have guarded!' said one. 'Who will be the man to make a bonfire of White House?'

'I !' and 'I !' ran furiously up and down the lines. The major commanded silence, and consulted with his subordinates as to the propriety of pursuit. It was decided that a regiment was no match for thrice its number supported by flying artillery. So, in shame and wrath, the Federals counted the moments till, in the gray of the morning, lancers, cavalry, and cannon arrived in force. Then there was galloping southward, after the method of the kinsmen who chased 'Young Lochivar ;' but the forayers were meantime feeding their ponies at Charles City Court-house, and the report of their adventure was being screamed by news-boys in Richmond.

A raid so dashing was never made on the continent before—never, perhaps, in any part of the world. The forayers had ridden eighty miles in eleven hours, and every rod of their progress was marked by devastation and death. There was something fearfully dramatic in the rapidity and completeness of the destruction. As I rode back to Tunstall's at seven o'clock, I thought of the threat of Roderick Dhu :

The guards shall start in Stirling porch ;
And when I light my nuptial torch,
A thousand villages in flames
Shall scare the slumbers of King James.

The hero of this raid was himself of Scotch descent, and the name of General Stuart is identified with the most brilliant episodes of the war.

THE CONICAL GROWTH OF TREES.

If we look at the stem and branches of a tree in winter, when deprived of its summer leaves, we shall see at once that it is constructed on the principle of a cone ; for the main stem of the tree is broadest at the base, and gradually decreases in thickness towards the extremities of its branches. Any branch in the place where a side-branch originates, is thicker than the side-branch ; so also this side-branch is thicker than the branchlet which it produces, and in this manner the thickness of the main stem steps, as it were, away by degrees from branch to branch, until at length it loses itself in the fine branches of the youngest generation of shoots, or the most recent growths. It is well known that the cone is the stabellest structure in nature, and the tree may be very properly regarded as an arborescent cone.

If a transverse section of a young beech-tree is examined, it will be found to consist of a number of concentrical and almost circular beds or layers of wood, ensheathing one another about a common centre, which is occupied by a canal of pith, the whole being covered by the bark formed on the outside of the stem. The longitudinal section, on the contrary, shews that the stem is composed of a series of superposed and hollow elongated cones, the old conical growth, or woody layers of the last and previous seasons, forming a firm foundation for the new conical layers of the next and succeeding years.

The conical growth of the tree is the result of the conical formation of the first year's shoot, which is the foundation of the subsequent annual additions of wood and bark ; for as these are deposited in strata which lie parallel with the wood and bark of the first year's shoot, the conical form of the superposed layers is necessarily retained.

Growth in length and growth in thickness must therefore be regarded as the result of one and the same vegetative cause—namely, the formation each year of a new conical layer or enveloping mantle of wood and bark, which extends from the top to the bottom of the tree. The following law will express the relation subsisting between the two dimensions of length and breadth—the branches are more

cylindrical the longer they are, and more conical in proportion as they are shorter.

As examples of well-marked conical growths, we may mention those extremely abbreviated shoots called thorns, of which the Black-thorn and the American Cockspur Thorn furnish us with good examples. That thorns are only abortive shoots or branches, is proved by the wild plum-tree ; this tree when planted in a good soil changes its thorns into branches.

In the case of the Weeping Willow, on the contrary, we have an instance of branches which tend more to a cylindrical than to a conical form. In consequence of this peculiarity, the branches of this tree are long and pendulous, their waterfall-like curvature is extremely graceful, and as they wave backward and forward in the wind, the tree presents one of the most beautiful and picturesque of objects.

But the conical growth of trees is sometimes strikingly apparent in their landscape character, or general outline when viewed from a distance. This is the case in the great natural order *Coniferae*, or the cone-bearing family. The trees belonging to this order, such as the Juniper, the Red Cedar, the Norway Spruce Fir, and the celebrated Norfolk Island Pine, when seen from a distance, are clearly conical in their outline ; and this is the case with all the other members of this family. The leaves of these trees are excessively narrow and small, the blade being reduced to an abortive condition. They have been called by the German botanists with some propriety needle-leaved trees. These leaves are quite as capable of forming wood as those which possess a true lamina or blade, for they make up by their immense number and their persistent nature for their want of surface. The branches of the fir and yew have always on them the foliage of five or six summers, their leaves remaining usually that length of time attached to them.

The conical form is, in fact, more or less the original form of all trees during the earlier portion of their life ; for 'at first, growth takes place in the direction of the main stem' (see paper on the Growth of Trees, No. 444, page 5, of this *Journal*), and the growth of the branches is consequently greatly restricted ; but after a certain number of years, the stem obtains its greatest height, and growth is 'diverted to its leading branches,' which lose their conical figure or outline considered collectively, and spreading out on all sides, form a dome-shaped or hemispherical top or crown. This is particularly grand in the horse-chestnut, the lime-tree, and the elm, which make for this reason a fine appearance on a lawn or in a park, in addition to the recommendation of the perfect shade which they afford. At this second stage in the life of the tree, the main stem is no longer distinguishable from the other branches, because they have made with it an equally powerful growth. In the *Coniferae*, however, development is not carried so far, for the tree stops at the first stage, and therefore retains permanently its cone-like appearance. For this reason, as well as on account of the simplicity of their leaves and flowers, and their high geological antiquity, coniferous trees may be regarded as of a low type of organization.

This discussion of the conical growth of trees leads us necessarily to the investigation of the source from whence they derive their elaborated formative material. *This is undoubtedly the leaf.* Now, this law is plainly apparent in the single shoot, the figure of which depends on the manner in which the leaves are disposed about its surface ; for as the wood is formed by the leaves, when these are placed in regular order over every part of the circumference of the shoot, as in the beech and lime, the shoot is always necessarily cylindrical, for the woody matter proceeding from the leaves is then distributed equally on

all its sides. On the contrary, when the leaves on the single shoot are opposite, or in pairs, placed at right angles to each other, as in the spindle-tree and maple, the descent of nourishing matter from them is necessarily limited to that portion of the stem immediately below them, and consequently the young shoots and branches of these trees are square.

But not only the form of the single shoot, but also the extent to which it is conical, depends on the leaves. If the vital activity of the leaves is too enfeebled to form wood, if they remain crowded together into clusters at the top of the shoot without separating, the shoot may increase in length, but there is no increase in breadth. Two shoots of the horse-chestnut are now lying before me, placed side by side for comparison, and the contrast between their figure is not only very perceptible, but also highly instructive. The shoot in the one case is conical; in the other, cylindrical. The conical shoot is the growth of a single year; the cylindrical shoot is the growth of ten years; yet both are nearly the same size. As the elaborated woody matter forming the substance of these shoots was derived from the leaves with which they were clothed, and as, in the case of the ten years' shoot, very little was supplied, that shoot is cylindrical, not conical, like the one year's shoot.

It follows, too, that the breadth of the wood-rings formed annually, and which are visible on the transverse section of the stem, must also correspond with the amount of active leaf-surface which is put forth into the atmosphere during the vegetative season. In order to verify this truth, it is only necessary to select branches the leaves of whose side-shoots are annually put forth as leaf-clusters, and which therefore take a minimum of development, and consequently exercise the smallest possible amount of physiological influence on the branch, and where powerful growths are suddenly succeeded by growths greatly retarded. One such branch now lies before me, seven years old, whose main stem is eighteen inches long, and whose side-shoots are abortive in their growth. It grew the first three years five inches annually, or altogether fifteen inches; but in the last four years the growth stagnated, or averaged only nine lines^{*} annually; and the cross section of the branch actually shews the three inner rings or woody layers, formed by the leaves of the first three years, to be much broader than the four outer rings, the leaf-deposits of the last four years.

These investigations and others lead irresistibly to the conclusion, that the breadth of the wood-rings is determined not only by the activity of the leaves of the terminal shoot of the main stem, but that the leaves of the side-shoots or of the whole system of shoots co-operate; and therefore that the leafage of each season forms a common source, whence is derived not only the nutrient forming the new layer or covering of each individual branch or system of shoots, but of the main stem or support of the whole of them. The leaves are therefore the sources of the elaborated formative material which proceeds from them to the shoots, from the shoots to the branchlets, and from the branchlets to the branches, whose union forms the main stem of the tree, just as a thousand little streamlets pour together their tributary waters, which, united, form the broad river that rolls on to the ocean.

It is thus that, in the course of centuries, solid and enduring vegetable monuments are reared—nothing but earth and air—yet woven by the magic chemistry of air from these elements into trees which outlive the successive generations of man, broad at the base, and tapering to the extremities. Nature builds on the comical principle, to insure their stability, and the dark and sombre forests of pine and fir which clothe the sides of the mountains as the traveller approaches

the snow-line, are constructed on the same architectural principle as the mountains themselves; for the avalanche loosening from its mountain-heights, and coming down with an accelerated rush into the subjacent valleys, and the leaf falling from one of those trees on the mountain-side, are both detached from cones. Such is the beauty, simplicity, and grandeur of the works of nature.

THE GHOST OF MONT-FLEURI.

SOME years ago, a series of disastrous events compelled me to seek some temporary resting-place, more suited to my diminished fortunes than my native land. My friends, disinterestedly, recommended one of the more distant colonies as the fittest spot for the scene of my banishment; but I thanked them, and preferring the more accessible shores of France, transported myself and my 'belongings' to a village in the north of that delightful country.

Situated on the shores of a wide and lovely bay, the spot I had selected for my future residence was, properly speaking, a collection of *bougeries*, rather than one continuous town; for although all the villages were presided over by the same *maire* and the same municipal authorities, they stood at considerable distances from each other, and had each, besides the common name of St-Nevars, which belonged to the municipality, a distinct and specific appellation of its own.

The château of which I am about to relate the history being situated in the most easterly of these villages, I shall simply enumerate the rest—St-Loam, St-Ideul, La Roulaïs, La Gauletterie, La Ville-Pépin, Les Bas-Sablons et Troquetain—and resume my narrative.

A fine old building is the château of Mont-Fleuri, dating from the middle-ages, and but slightly affected by the great Revolution which annihilated so many of its contemporaries. At the time of my arrival in the district it was uninhabited, and had been for years, for it enjoyed the reputation of being haunted; and, indeed, scenes terrible enough had been enacted within its walls to disturb any spirit—however well intentioned and inclined to rest—that might have been an actor in them in the days of its flesh. Erected without much regard to symmetry, or the slightest pretension to comfort, Mont-Fleuri is, however, nicely situated in the centre of a block of ten French acres, partly laid out as a farm, and partly as a pleasure-ground and *jardin Anglais*, and commands one of the loveliest views imaginable, especially from the upper windows.

The bay, the several villages, with their picturesque old churches embowered amid groves of *tilleul*, the curious old wind-mills perched on every little eminence, the wide Rance, the mildest and yet most treacherous of rivers, the fields, gardens, and orchards of the peasantry, altogether make up a landscape of great beauty; in which, when viewed from other points, the woods of the Brilliante and the Château de Mont-Fleuri are not the least attractive features.

Upon proceeding, shortly after my arrival at St-Nevars, to visit the village of Paramer, in which Mont-Fleuri is situated, I found that, for once, rumour had not overstepped the truth when describing the lamentable state of neglect and ruin into which that venerable edifice had been allowed to fall. Doors swung lazily on their rusty hinges, glass had quite disappeared from the old-fashioned windows, the floors were actually overgrown in places with moss and lichens, and the *tapisserie* had fallen in shreds from the green and mouldy walls. The garden was quite as desolate as the house; flowers and weeds were everywhere blended together in most unadmirable confusion; bowers were bowed to the earth by age, neglect, and an overwhelming weight of clematis and eglantine; a conservatory, which had once laid claim to elegance, was a

* A line is the twelfth part of an inch.

hideous ruin, the abode of rats and toads, that crouched beneath the relics of the exotics and flower-pots of former days. Everything about the place spoke of neglect and utter desolation; and the cause which had transformed this Eden into a very desert was—a ghost!

The château, however, was to be let for a trifle; and, undaunted by reports of nocturnal visitants from another world, I took a lease of Mont-Fleuri from the *propriétaire*, M. du Val, who agreed to put it in somewhat better repair as speedily as possible. ‘Many hands make light work;’ and M. du Val, glad to have let the place at any price, in an incredibly short space from the commencement of the renovating process, got everything set to rights; and calling at our lodgings, one morning acquainted us with the desirable fact, that the château was ready for our occupation whenever we chose to take possession of it, which we accordingly did in the course of the ensuing week.

Several months passed away at Mont-Fleuri (of which we had taken possession at the beginning of winter), and we found ourselves very comfortable. The château had been rendered wind and water proof, the garden set in thorough order, the farm laid under crop, the conservatory repaired and partly filled, our *basse-cour* stocked, and our Pépée (our only *bonne*) inducted into the mysteries of *rostif* and *bifteck*, which she had learned to prepare, as *she*, at all events, considered, à l’*Anglaise*. Our pigs fattened comfortably; our hens laid dozens of eggs; our pigeons hatched numerous couples of callow young, delicious in a pie; our cow yielded abundance of milk, cream, and butter; and last, but not least, our baby threw as heartily as fond parents could desire; but, above all, no ghost, as we had indeed anticipated all along, had appeared upon the scene, to scare us from our propriety by unseemly gambols in the moonlight, or minnets upon the stairs or in the garret, to both of which amusements country gossip declared it to be addicted.

Some twenty years or so previous to the date of our occupation, Mont-Fleuri had been inhabited by a certain Comte du Lyc, an *émigré*, who had married, during his residence in England, a rich and vulgar widow of the name of Smith. Upon his return to his native land, after the accession of Napoleon, M. du Lyc had purchased and taken up his abode at Mont-Fleuri, where he and his comtesse entertained the neighbouring gentry with considerable *éclat*. Among the guests thus admitted to the château was one Louvel, or, as he called himself, De Louvel, although the ennobling particle was not generally looked upon as genuine.

This Louvel was a young man of most engaging appearance, but, as subsequent events too clearly proved, of most fiendish disposition, who speedily contrived to ingratiate himself, in no common degree, with both his hosts, by ministering with assiduous attention to their foibles. Madame la Comtesse loved flattery, and Monsieur le Comte had no less a partiality for wine. Louvel contrived to satisfy them both; and, if report belies him not, M. du Lyc received from the hand of his guest some draught more potent than the Burgundy he loved, for, without any previous illness, he was found one morning dead in bed, after a carouse overnight with his friend, who, exactly three months after the funeral of her husband, married the wealthy but by no means youthful widow. Not very long afterwards, this unhappy woman herself died broken-hearted, amidst the relics of her former grandeur, for her miscreant husband had soon succeeded in dissipating the greater portion of her wealth.

Louvel, shortly after these events, sold the château he had polluted by his crimes to a M. de Chèvremont, a scion of an old noble family, who held a high official appointment at St-Lô. This gentleman, though yet in the prime of life, had passed his *première jeu-*

nesse; but madame was young, and extremely beautiful. In consequence of the appointment he held, M. de Chèvremont was frequently brought in contact with M. Gauron, the mayor of St-Nevars, a young man of agreeable appearance and fascinating address. Official acquaintance ripened, in time, into private intimacy, and M. le Maire became a frequent visitor at Mont-Fleuri, where he was always received with *empressement* by both monsieur and madame.

Suddenly, the little world of St-Nevars was electrified by the intelligence that M. le Maire was dying. A violent attack of typhus fever, it was said, had rendered his recovery hopeless, and on the very day when this announcement was made to the sorrowing community, Monsieur and Madame de Chèvremont drove together, for the first time, through the streets of St-Nevars, every one remarking how charming madame looked—*de si belles couleurs!*—and yet, mournful to relate, that very same evening, after prematurely giving birth to a son, she expired, to the intense sorrow of her inconsolable husband.

M. Gauron and Madame de Chèvremont were both buried the same week, and the disconsolate widower immediately quitted the scene of his bereavement. Of course, there were not wanting those who insisted upon giving to these unfortunate but perfectly natural occurrences a widely different interpretation; but to the honour of the little community be it said, when, foremost among these *mauvaises langues*, la Veuve Outré dropped mysterious hints of a duel across a dining-table, in consequence, as she alleged, of an intercepted letter, very few of the inhabitants were found to give credit to a rumour, which has nevertheless, remained uncontradicted to this day.

Mont-Fleuri continued uninhabited until taken, nearly three years after the above events, by Captain Talbot, a retired officer, formerly in the service of the East India Company, whom ill health had compelled to seek a more temperate climate than that in which he had spent his earlier years. A twelvemonth's residence, however, in the salubrious climate of St-Nevars had had the effect of so completely restoring the gallant officer's health, that, upon receiving unexpectedly the offer of a lucrative post in the country he had lately quitted, and had never expected to behold again, he closed with the offer at once, and straightway set out for his destination, leaving his wife and children to take care of Mont-Fleuri for the remainder of their lease of seven years.

Mrs Talbot was a delicate person, and had been so for years; but her children—she had six, three sons and three daughters—were all remarkably strong, and continued in perfect health until about six months after the departure of their father, when the eldest was taken suddenly and violently ill. Mrs Talbot, who did not place much confidence in the abilities of French physicians, treated her daughter in accordance with some family receipts or prescriptions, in whose efficacy she reposed the most implicit trust. Nevertheless, when the young lady, instead of getting better, grew gradually worse, and one of the younger children began to exhibit symptoms of the same malady which had prostrated his sister, the anxious mother decided upon calling in *le docteur Cormao*, the principal medical man of St-Nevars, who pronounced the patients to be suffering from a malignant attack of small-pox, and held out but small hopes of their recovery. In the course of the next day, Mrs Talbot herself was struck down by the same terrible disorder, and, shortly afterwards, the whole family, servants and all, were laid on beds of sickness, and, as the sequel, with one exception, proved, of death.

Of all that household, Nanon Magat, the cook, alone survived. Mrs Talbot, her six children, and their other domestic, fell victims to the terrible visitation; so suddenly had the calamity overtaken them, that Mrs Talbot had been unable to communicate

with any of her friends in England, and their addresses being unknown to the French authorities, who probably did not give themselves much trouble to discover them, many months elapsed before the sad truth was imparted to the bereaved husband and father, who immediately, upon receipt of the mournful intelligence, returned to Europe, and hastened to St. Nevers.

Doubtless, the sight of the silent and deserted house he had left, scarcely eighteen months before, so full of life and happiness, had a powerful and fatal effect upon his already excited imagination, for, the following morning, he was found by some of the neighbours dead, and the implement of destruction with which he had committed the rash act lying blood-stained by his side.

Not very long after the consummation of this deplorable tragedy, Mont-Fleuri was let to another English family, who appear to have been the first of a succession of tenants who were disturbed by the visits of denizens of another world, and vacated the premises almost immediately upon taking possession.

After half-a-dozen families had been thus successively put to flight, the château became the property of M. du Val, who, being a courageous little man, and *un ancien militaire*, vowed he cared no more for ghosts than rats, and that neither should frighten him from his house. For six months or so, he stoutly kept his word, and laughed the idea of *revenants* to scorn; but towards the middle of summer his face began to assume an anxious and careworn expression, and although still ridiculing the idea of haunting spirits, he began to talk about the air of the place not agreeing with his health, and shortly after quitted Mont-Fleur, which remained tenantless, and was suffered to fall into disrepair, until taken by ourselves.

We had been in possession for nearly six months, as I have already stated, and had had no intimation of the presence of 'ghosts' in our abode, but they were coming.

One evening about the middle of May, as my wife and self sat in the dark oak-parlour, canvassing our domestic affairs, we heard a curious noise, as of some one suddenly throwing a handful of dried pease down the stairs. Quite distinctly we heard the vegetables in question rattling and bumping down from step to step, but upon my opening the parlour-door, and looking out into the hall, to ascertain whence the unusual sounds proceeded, to my surprise, not a pea or anything else was to be seen.

I returned to my seat, and in reply to Matilda's inquiring glance, remarked: 'Rats, my dear; we must certainly get a cat,' and resumed the interrupted conversation. But the visionary pease, or whatever they were, recommenced rolling down the stairs, and fairly broke up our *séance* for that night, as well as for many more. As long as we stood with candles in the hall, the ghosts (for Matilda averred the 'spirits' had returned) were quiet enough, but the moment we re-entered the parlour, and closed the door, that moment they began again; until, at length, we were compelled to retire from the field, and leave our mysterious visitants to amuse themselves in the dark as they pleased.

Although at first I ridiculed the idea of a ghost, and endeavoured to explain away the mysterious sounds, by attributing them to natural though undiscovered causes, even suspecting that Mademoiselle Pépé knew more of their origin than she thought proper to admit, I must confess that the nightly recurrence of a disturbance for which I was, after all, unable in any rational manner to account, was not without producing a considerable impression on my mind, for although I would, without hesitation, have grappled with a visible ghost, this noisy, invisible, intangible fellow daunted me at last, and threw poor Matilda into such a state of nervous agitation, that the slightest noise would almost send her into fits.

About six or seven weeks after the first attack upon our domestic peace by the malicious disturbers of our rest, as we sat as usual in the parlour, in instant expectation of the commencement of the nightly performance, our Pépé rushed in, pale and trembling, from the kitchen, and, throwing herself at Matilda's feet, screamed: 'Je l'ai vu, monsieur! madame! Je l'ai vu!' and fainted.

Here was a climax. Matilda, though scarcely less frightened than our bonne, picked her up, whilst I ran out to the well for a jug of cold water to sprinkle on her face. As I opened the kitchen door, I imagined I caught a glimpse of a white robe flitting by in the dim moonlight, but was in too great a hurry to take particular notice of the apparition, if it were one; and, if the whole truth must be told, just a little frightened too; but hastily filling the jug I had brought with me, returned to the parlour, where I found Mademoiselle Pépé recovered from her swoon, but obstinately dumb to all my wife's inquiries as to what she affirmed she had seen.

'Je l'ai vu; oui, je l'ai vu!' was all the answer she vouchsafed to my more pressing questions, and with this rather ambiguous reply, we were forced for the time to be content.

Our bonne insisted upon bringing her *paillasson* into our room, and sleeping there, upon the floor, all night, vowing that no power on earth would tempt her to spend another evening beneath our roof.

Nightly, the disturbances increased; we were fairly at our wits' end, and more than half inclined to quit such an uncomfortable residence, when a cousin of my wife's wrote to her, informing us of her intention of spending a month at Mont-Fleuri. Here was a predicament. The letter was dated on a Monday, and our cousin promised to be with us in a week from the date of her letter; we received it on a Thursday, and there was not time to look out for a new house. It was too bad, just as we were on the point of retiring in favour of the ghost, to be required to add another auditor to its nocturnal revels, especially, too, as our bonne had left us; for though she came over, as a great compliment, for an hour or two in the morning, not all the silver in France, I verily believe, would have tempted her to sleep again in our haunted house.

There would be no use in writing to Miss Mortimer, I knew, even if there had been sufficient time, for she was a 'strong-minded woman,' and laughed the idea of ghosts to utter scorn. We must wait; and so we did; but the spirits, as if irritated by the knowledge of her arrival, fairly ran riot through the house during the weary nights that elapsed before our cousin's arrival, scattering invisible pease on every side, not only down the stairs, but against the doors and windows.

At length, Miss Mortimer arrived, and heartily she laughed when informed of the cause of our terrified and jaded appearance.

'It was absurd and ridiculous,' she argued, 'to suppose that an immaterial spirit had the power of making a noise; you might just as reasonably expect a shadow to upset a washing-tub.'

That was all very fine; we might have been of the same opinion once ourselves; but we had *heard* it, spirit or no spirit, too often to permit of our being sceptical upon the subject; besides, Pépé had *seen* one, and I myself even had caught a glimpse of its retreating robe. So we bade our cousin 'wait.'

After dinner, we three sat in the oak parlour, between the kitchen and the hall; Miss Mortimer as calm and cool as a frozen sea, but we, her unfortunate cousins and hosts, in a state of trepidation and anxiety dreadful to behold, but worse to be experienced. Presently the mysterious disturbance commenced as usual in the hall; shadowy pease rolled in handfuls down the wide stone stairs; Matilda screamed; I started with an impatient exclamation to my feet.

'Now, John,' said Miss Mortimer coolly, as she

proceeded to the door—"now for the solution of your mystery. The "ghost" cannot escape me."

We followed her into the hall with lights. Nothing, as usual.

"Have you a dark-lantern, John?"

"Yes, Louisa; I believe there is one in the house somewhere."

"Will you get it for me, if you please?"

I complied.

"Now," said our cousin quietly, as soon as she had secured the lantern, "we must wait for the disturbers here in the dark. They seem to have a very proper dread of letting themselves be seen. But you'll hold the lantern, and do not open it until I tell you."

Having closed the parlour door, we waited, in a state of painful suspense, for several minutes, when pit-a-pat, pit, pit, down came the pease. Matilda almost fainted in my arms; but Miss Mortimer dashingly forward, grappled for a moment with something on the stairs.

"I have it!" she cried triumphantly. "John, the light."

I opened the lantern, and lo! the midnight disturber, the destroyer of domestic quiet, the long-dreaded "ghost," stood revealed, thanks to a woman's courage, *in propria persona* before us. Nay, Louisa Mortimer held it quite composedly in her hand, and it was—a cockroach, nothing more!

This discovery accounted for the fact of the "spirits" having made their first appearance after the occupancy of the Talbots, who had probably brought them to Mont-Fleuri with their luggage from the East.

Our Pépé presently returned to us, and admitted, when pressed upon the subject by Miss Mortimer, that the "spirit" she had seen *might* after all have been a sheet or tablecloth she had forgotten on the line; which would also account for the fluttering robe I fancied I had seen.

As for the "ghosts," we were troubled with them no more, for I caused their holes to be carefully stopped; and we afterwards spent many happy years at Mont-Fleuri, and never heard a pea either in the hall or on the stairs.

THE FAIR ISLE.

By any one traversing that part of the German Ocean lying under latitude $59\frac{1}{2}$ degrees north, and longitude 2 degrees west—or otherwise, about sixty miles north-east of Westray, in Orkney, and about an equal distance south-east from the south point of Shetland—may be seen rising into view like a speck in the sea a small dark spot of land, which rejoices in the bright name of the Fair Isle. Except, perhaps, St Kilda, the outermost of the Hebrides on the other side of Scotland, there is not a more lonely inhabited spot in the British dominions. A gentleman lately passing that way, told the writer 'it is the most lonely spot I ever saw. There is not any communication whatever with it except in fine weather, as you can only land in boats. There is no harbour for a vessel to go into, and the steamer running from Shetland to Granton passes the island, but does not call there.' Now, as this fine or calm weather is comparatively rare in those latitudes, and stormy weather, at least in winter, more the rule than the exception, the isolation approaches very near completeness to the dwellers in that sea-girdled home.

The island forms a sort of connecting-link, though a very long and wide one, between Orkney and Shetland, and in its geological features partakes something of the nature of both. Its general character is rocky, with much heath, but having also considerable portions of cultivatable land. There are excellent cod and other fishing off the coast; and between the raising of a little corn, rye, and potatoes on the land, the fishing of the sea, and the making of curiously coloured woollen stockings, the manufac-

ture of which is said to have been introduced by a shipwrecked crew of the Spanish Armada, the inhabitants chiefly eke out their scanty subsistence. Nor is, unfortunately, another less unobjectionable mode of living unknown to the Fair Islanders, in the trade of smuggling spirits and other contraband commodities from Holland and the continental ports. In fact, a more convenient smuggling station there cannot be. In some instances, too, they seem to have improved upon the ordinary simplicity of that traffic, and not only elude payment of the government custom on the corn-brandy imported, but shew an equal dexterity in outwitting their own customers. The captains of fishing or other craft calling at the island, and taking off a few casks of that colourless liquid, would do well to taste as well as see the article before payment, otherwise, on future trial, but when too late, it may be found that the casks contain nothing more alcoholic than that distilled by nature herself from the bubbling fountain. The present tacksman of the island receives his rent from the tenants almost wholly in kind—that is, in fish caught round the coast—the only money he got last year being, I believe, about five shillings, which he returned to the poor people. It is entirely upon the produce of their fishings they depend for the means of paying their land-rents, maintaining thus a sort of amphibious existence. This double mode of life, however, exerts an unhappy influence upon their habits of industry, in dividing their attention between two callings. Anything like a continued hard day's work in field-labour is a thing unknown. Their implements of husbandry, as may be expected, are of the most primitive kind; and the extent of their farm-operations is simply the raising of a little corn or potatoes sufficient to supply their own personal wants through the winter, leaving the bounty of the sea to supplement the deficiency of rent, and procure some articles of rough clothing. Until last spring, the population of the Isle exceeded three hundred; but at that time a band of about fifty of the inhabitants emigrated to Canada, thus reducing the number to about two hundred and sixty souls, the present population.

From the earliest times, until only about four centuries ago, all those northern isles have been more Norwegian than Scotch. Looking back to a period antecedent to the days of Kenneth Macalpine of Scotland and Alfred of England, in the middle of the ninth century, we find them in comparatively quiet possession of the Picts. But although that people had a prior residence in Scotland even to the Scotti from Ireland on the west, they themselves were but intruders into the east and north from Scandinavia. Soon after Kenneth II. had fused or welded the two people into one nation, new tribes of warlike Scandinavians, but still successive waves of the same sea, came over and dispossessed the Picts of the northern isles. These were the Danes, whose chiefs were the famous sea-kings of Norway.

Long was the struggle, however, between Norway and Scotland for supremacy. In 1098, Magnus Barefoot, king of Norway, had reduced Orkney, Shetland, and the Hebrides into complete subjection, and the first two were entirely peopled by Norwegians. Nor was it until 1468 that they were united to Scotland, when given to James III. as the dowry of his bride the princess of Denmark. Still the people would doubtless retain the Norwegian type, even when amalgamated with the Scotch, in the same way as the Saxons, though overlapped by the Normans, retained long their own striking peculiarities.

As to the Fair Islanders, tradition, not uncorroborated by facts and physical resemblances, appends another branch to the historic tree. When that formidable Armada, fitted out by Philip II. of Spain to invade England and crush the Reformation, approached the shores of Britain, the elements, no less than Elizabeth's

brave commanders, did their part of the work in scattering and destroying the ships. All round the west of Scotland, the Orkneys, and Shetland, fragmentary proofs of that disaster still remain; and that great numbers of the luckless crews which manned the ships were also drifted on shore, where they took root, like seedlings driven by the wind, and mixed with the indigenous population, is also certain. On this Fair Isle, then, it was that one of the largest and most magnificent of these vessels was driven, being neither more nor less than the admiral's own ship; and to where it lies sunk in the depths of the ocean, the people are still fond of pointing attention. Several of these sailors, probably galley-slaves, remained and took up their abode in the shelter of that friendly Isle, and, it is believed, taught the inhabitants the art to which we have already alluded; and of this Spanish origin of three hundred years ago, many of the present inhabitants still retain most conspicuous and unmistakable traces; so that this admixture of Iberian and Scandinavian blood is, in all probability, to be traced in the descent of the present dwellers of that secluded gem of the ocean.

Like the occupiers of Pitcairn's Island, under similar circumstances, these people were thus forced by position to become their own legal and other guardians, and in this manner, down to the present day, have they ever continued to be so. Long and strong as the arm of the law proverbially is, neither its length nor strength seems ever to have reached so far across that wild sea as to plant any administering functionary there. Through all those three hundred years, each individual inhabitant has been a law unto himself, and doing only that which seemed right in his own eyes. Still, whatever in past times may have been the consequences of such a position on the habits of the people, their present character, as given to the writer last summer by one of themselves, the lately appointed schoolmaster of the Isle, is, on the whole, not derogatory to their good instincts. A more orthodox system of things has also just now been instituted; and besides the schoolmaster, who is a well-qualified and excellent man, a few weeks ago, the Home Mission of the Church of Scotland appointed a clergyman to settle permanently among them. Before this, about once in the year or so, a clergyman from Shetland visited the Isle, and interchanged a few friendly offices with the people, but on his departure again, they were left entirely to their own resources and their own guidance.

As for postal communication, the writer of this sketch a short time ago received a letter from the clergyman alluded to, notifying his arrival on the island, the letter being brought back by the vessel that conveyed him thither. In it, he mentions that if written to on receipt of it, in the ordinary course, he would receive such letter about the end of March! to which a reply might possibly be expected in London about the end of May! The schoolmaster, however, who has now been above a year in the place, gives a much longer interval than this, and considers six months about a fair average time for a letter to be sent to Edinburgh and its reply received. It is only an average of chances too, for there is no regular communication at all. It depends upon fishing and other vessels going and returning; and upon open boats, in which the adventurous Fair Islemen occasionally sail to Kirkwall; which chances are again dependent upon the no less precarious vicissitudes of the weather; so that, except by a favourable opportunity, a letter might be sent not only to India but to Australia, and an answer received, as soon as an inhabitant of the Fair Isle, sixty miles from Orkney, could write to and hear from a friend in London. Think of this, ye dwellers in the metropolis, who grumble and write to the *Times* if your postman lags behind his accustomed five minutes past eight

with your country letters, to say nothing of the lightning speed of your telegraphs bringing news under sea and over land in a few seconds of time from the most distant places.

That noble ship, the *Sovereign*, as she passes on her way every week from Lerwick to Kirkwall, and on to Granton, sees and is seen by the Fair Isle—can she not deflect from her course for a few hours to hold a friendly chat with its lonely dwellers, take and bring their letters, and make them to feel something like a genial glow of brotherhood wafted from the warm centres of their common fatherland? Measuring distance by the plummet of time, many of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, indeed, are in winter as remote from Edinburgh and London as New York or Philadelphia. In other words, a letter taken a good fourteen days to come to either of the capitals from any place not close by Lerwick or Kirkwall, and in summer about a week—the same returning. What a boon, therefore, would it be to place, instead of the ordinary slow packeta, one or two small steamers among the isles, to circulate among them as collectors of letters and goods, to feed the main postal line going south, and thus secure a more regular communication.

As to the powers vested in the clergyman of the Fair Isle, they will necessarily be of the most multifarious kind. He will apparently be something of a king as well as priest, the governor, magistrate, and doctor, as well as minister; for, except the schoolmaster and himself, there is no other functionary whatever, civil, military, or ecclesiastic, there resident, nor, as it appears, has there ever been.

AGAINST POSSESSING TWO TONGUES.

UPON a certain great occasion of international amity, whereon many speeches were delivered by Englishmen in what they imagined to be the language of their alien auditors, Mr Bright, M.P., expressed himself in the vernacular, confessing and bewailing his inability to speak French. I admire this orator's modesty, but I do not sympathise with him in his regret. I prefer rather the sentiment of that national hero who publicly thanked the gods that he could compel his tongue to utter no language save that of his fatherland. Let there be a Universal Tongue, by all means, if the philologists will have it so. I have experienced great inconvenience when travelling abroad from the unfinished character of this great scheme of theirs myself, and I should vastly like to see it accomplished—only let them be particularly careful to select for their purpose the *English*.

My acquaintance is extensive, and I do not wish to increase it, but if there is a description of person that I am less desirous to know than another, it is one who is recommended to me as being 'an accomplished linguist.' I should have better hopes of social advantage from a 'first-rate pugilist,' or even from a gentleman whose introduction was once promised to me by an intoxicated market-gardener upon a Citizen 'bus, as 'the grower of the werry finest 'ollyocks in all Middlesex.' What a man gains in words—in the facility of expressing himself—he generally loses in ideas, as witness the Popular Preacher, the Demagogue, and the 'Cheap Jack,' and this is particularly the case when he acquires various tongues. Happy, indeed, is such a man if he possesses an idea apiece for them. The late Mr Douglas Jerrold was annoyed upon one occasion by an individual who was airing nine languages at once before a distinguished company. 'Nine, sir,' observed this social scourge, this cat-o'-nine-tails, 'I can speak nine distinctly,* but my revered father, when alive, he could speak no less than fifteen.' 'Ah!' remarked Jerrold, 'I knew a man who could

* He could imitate five cats, sir, five distinct cats in a wheelbarrow, upon my sacred honour: now one can't help liking a fellow with such traits as those.—*Pickwick*.

speak five-and-twenty, and who never said anything worth hearing in *any one of them*?

The possession of a foreign tongue is doubtless useful to a man among the people who speak it, but among his own countrymen, it is no more advantageous, and scarcely less ornamental, than a second nose. Why, then, does he almost invariably flourish it in our faces, as though it were a fan with Rimmel's accent upon it? Why does he say *Adieu* (with a contortion) instead of 'Good-bye'? Why does he call me his '*Bon ami*', when he knows I hate both him and it? Why does he utter *Je suis prêt*—why does he?—instead of 'I am ready.' '*Toujours prêt*', replied a certain lady, who was always chattering bad French, to an individual who offered his arm to take her down to dinner—'*Toujours prêt* is my motto.'

But that heroic man, whom I am proud to call my friend, responded sternly: 'Then it *should* be "*Toujours prêt*," madam.' Let Social-science Associations boast themselves as much as they will, it is men like these who are our real reformers. 'How agreeable,' remarked the late Sir Cornelius Lewis after the miseries of an evening-party, 'would this life be, were it not for its amusements; and especially if there was no such thing as "a little music" in the world.' And how charming, say I, might conversation be made, if all French phrases were rigorously excluded; and especially if there was no such thing as a Parisian accent. To be able to pronounce the ultimate syllable in a French word ending with *in*, such as Houdin, in a certain distressingly unnatural manner, appears to be the summit of earthly ambition with some persons; and when they fancy they have attained to it, they thenceforth look down upon the rest of their fellow-creatures, as from a moral and intellectual pedestal. The more contemptible an accomplishment is, the prouder folks generally are when they possess it; a little worthless knowledge puffing up beyond all measure, as is exemplified in the case of college dons, dealers in fancy-dogs, and turnpike-keepers; which last, when placed where two roads meet, can generally inform the wayfarer which to choose in the most disagreeable manner conceivable. And thus it is with your linguist. The moralist may remark disparagingly upon the Double-tongued, but give me a hypocrite for a companion, say I, rather than any fellow who piques himself on his French, and interlards his conversation with phrases which he pretends cannot be translated into English. This is indeed one of the most ludicrous affectations ever acquiesced in by the ignorant; were these columns open to the full expression of an honest indignation, I could, *entre nous*, reader—that is to say, between you and me and the wall—give my own opinion on it, in very apt and forcible Saxon. As, indeed, the fashionable novel, with its meaningless Gallicisms, affords the lowest type of literature, so does the man with his talk slashed with French phrases present the feeblest form of conversationalist.

Give me the mirth that scorns to trench
On the bright shallows of the French,
But fills the genial eye, and rolls
Its broad deep current to our souls.

Like the immortal Samuel, 'I love talk,' but I can't abide talking on tiptoe.

Of the man who makes jokes in a foreign language, in a company composed of his own fellow-countrymen, I say nothing, for even the English tongue, so admirably fitted for invective, affords no adjective strong enough to apply to such an offence. Most of us, however, have witnessed the enormity, and the degradation of our species that has followed upon it; the pretended appreciation of the males, who are for the most part utterly ignorant of what they are laughing at, and the pitiable irresolution of the females, who are afraid of compromising themselves,

by applauding something that may not be proper. How infinitely more would such an offender have contributed to the general enjoyment, had he stood on his head upon a ginger-beer bottle; or performed 'the wheel' as it is enacted by what he would call the *gamins* of the street; or given some ingenious 'imitation' of bird, or beast, or fish. Everybody would have understood the entertainment; and even those who were above enjoying it, would have derived a satisfaction from considering how superior they themselves were to such a vulgar fellow. Whereas, from the unintelligible *jeu-de-mot*, nothing has flowed but hypocrisy and humiliation.

I was lately pursuing this subject, which is a favourite one with me, in a mixed company, among which there chanced to be an ancient Peninsular veteran, who, as I afterwards discovered, spoke every European language to perfection. Instead of obstructing the progress of my Crusade, however, he joined my standard, and assisted me in demolishing a hateful serjeant-at-law, who had just returned from a six months' sojourn in Italy, to talk as familiarly of *Ben Trovato* and *Siesta* as though they were his brother and sister.

'But in foreign countries, at least,' contended the serjeant, 'you must allow that a knowledge of the language is indispensable.'

'Quite the reverse, sir,' returned the bluff old general. 'It is better for your morality, your religion, and your good temper, never to understand what foreigners say.'

'Nay, but in warfare, for instance,' urged the cunning lawyer: 'nobody can be more aware than so distinguished an officer as yourself that a mutual understanding between allies is to be desired above all things. When you were in Portugal'—

'Ay, when I was in Portugal,' interrupted the general, rubbing his hands; 'then, as you say, it made a great difference whether you knew Portuguese or not. I have known the life or death of more than one honest fellow turn upon that very circumstance.'

'Exactly,' replied the serjeant triumphantly: 'you have known a man's life saved by his understanding Portuguese.'

'Not quite that,' responded the soldier; 'but I have known a man's life saved by another man's *not* understanding it.'

'Good,' said I; 'I can easily believe it; but I should like to know how it happened.'

'Well,' said the veteran; 'you are probably aware that Lord Wellington's discipline in the Peninsula was excessively severe. If a man did but forage for his mess without respect to the market-value of the commodity he brought back to camp; or if he suffered his affections to be centred on a young person in a nunnery; or if he picked up anything in a church that he had a fancy to send home to his friends—and chance to be discovered, the provost-marshall was sent for post-haste, and it was even betting whether the poor fellow in trouble was not hanged. Our chief was especially particular that the men conducted themselves with propriety when billeted upon the inhabitants of the country, and a portable gallows was even constructed, the effect of which was to make us the most courteous army that ever occupied a foreign land. Two men of my company, and excellent soldiers, happened to be lodging with an old Portuguese vine-dresser, who, in addition to feeding them with omelets swimming in rancid oil, allowed them insufficient firing. My unfortunate fellows, therefore, pulled up his vine-sticks, and made a good blaze for themselves, without saying By your leave, or With your leave. Whereupon, the old curmudgeon took the opportunity of the provost-marshall coming round to inquire whether there were any complaints, to set forth a piteous story of oppression and tyranny—more than three parts of which were doubtless lies. He held a bundle of the sticks in question with one hand,

and appealed to Heaven with the other, as though he had been wronged in the most wicked manner conceivable; while I was standing by, expecting every moment that the two offenders would be taken out and hanged forthwith. Now, it so happened that the provost-marshall, although an excellent Spanish scholar, knew nothing of Portuguese; so he turned to me, and inquired what was the matter. "Pray, tell me, captain," cried he, "what this old idiot is clamouring for? What does he want? And what have these men of yours done? And why does he shake that bundle of vine-sticks in their faces, as though he were Jupiter Tonans?"

"Well, marshal!" said I, "the fact is, he wants the poor fellows to sleep upon them. That is the only sort of bed he allows them, and because they murmur at such accommodation, he protests that he will get them punished, and, he hopes, even hanged."

"Blood-thirsty old scoundrel!" cried the marshal, addressing himself to the eloquent native; "hold your tongue, and don't attempt to get honest fellows into trouble. If I were they, I'm blessed if I wouldn't burn all your vine-sticks."

"And, with that, off he rode at a hand-gallop, leaving the vine-dresser still gesticulating, and my two poor fellows thankful enough to find themselves on their feet. Now, if that provost-marshall had understood Portuguese, they would have danced upon nothing."

B A L L A D - S U B J E C T S .

A FAIR test of the increasing interest that is felt in all that appertains to our old national literature is offered by the increased value obtained for specimens of it when offered for sale at public auctions. Some of these books fetch high prices on account of their rarity, and may have had no influence whatever on the national mind, but this cannot be said of a collection of ballads. Robert Harley, the first Earl of Oxford, began a collection of these popular compositions, which was sold along with his books, when it was bought by West, the president of the Royal Society; and at the subsequent sale of his library in 1773, it was bought by Major Pearson for, it is supposed, £20. This gentleman made considerable additions to it during the fifteen years it remained in his possession; but even then, when his collection of books went the way of the generality of such collections, it realised only £36, the Duke of Roxburghe being the purchaser. The duke set about adding to the collection with great earnestness, and at the sale of his library they realised £477. Mr Harding, who was the purchaser, sold them shortly after to Mr Bright for, it is said, £700.

There are about 1300 songs and ballads in this collection. The date when the first was printed is supposed to have been 1560, but the date of printing is, of course, no criterion of the actual antiquity of the ballad. The subjects of these ballads are of all kinds, and it will only be possible to give an outline of one or two of each class, but this will be sufficient to afford an idea of what that literature was like which, with the chap-books, was all that was possessed by the masses in the olden time. Love is the burden of a considerable proportion of these, and it is curious to observe how popular the notion was of a man being loved by a woman of higher degree than himself. Thus, the earl was favoured by the queen, the squire of low degree by the earl's daughter, the daughter of the squire of a more modern type bestowed her affections on the handsome young farmer, and the farmer's daughter in her turn bestowed hers on the jolly young ploughman. When war happened to be raging, there was a facile method of disposing of the last-named individual; namely, causing him to be kidnapped, and sent to sea, in which case the young lady expressed her determination in the following or a similar manner:

'O William, sweet William, with you I will go;
Since my cruel father has served you so,
I'll put on a pair of trousers, likewise a jacket blue,
And William, dear William, I'll go along with you.'

Occasionally the young person who is guilty of this indiscretion is led astray by her love for a sailor, as in the case of the lovely Constance of Appleby, who accepted the post of scullion to the cook on board the ship in which her lover served:

And at the fire hot,
Wonderful pains she took;
She served every one
Fitting to their degree,
And now and then alone,
She kissed Anthony.

These osculatory consolations were brought, however, to an abrupt termination in this case by the wreck of the vessel on the coast of Spain, and the entry of Constance into the port of Bilboa on a plank alone.

There is very little of the supernatural in these ballads, the appearance of a deceased lover to his hard-hearted mistress being an accident of the ballad of a later date. But there is an exception to this in the ballad headed *The Suffolk Miracle, or a Relation of a young Man who a Month after his Death appeared to his Sweetheart and carried her behind Forty Miles in two Hours' Time, and was never seen after but in the Grave*. It is possible that this may have been the original of Bürger's *Lenore*, but it is more probable that both were derived from the same legend, of older date than either.

Shooting has always been a favourite theme, from the days of Robin Hood, and probably long before, till now. Had a poet been present at the grand shooting-match at Wimbledon, he might have celebrated that meeting in strains which would have furnished food for serious reflection; nor would the humorous have been wanting as a contrast. In the distribution of prizes, for instance, who could help laughing when Lord Elcho suggested, as the marksman who had been successful in winning the iron safe approached to receive his prize, that the band should strike up *Wait for the Wagon?* A poet was not wanting at a meeting of an analogous character held at York in the days of Queen Elizabeth, where equal skill was displayed, though the weapons used were bows and arrows instead of rifles. This was held under the inspection of the Earl of Cumberland, assisted by the Earl of Essex, who kept the field, and there was a strong muster of people of rank present, including three Russian ambassadors, one of whom tried to draw a bow, and was greatly astonished at the distance to which the English bowmen could send their arrows. After describing the shooting, the poet exclaims:

God save the good Earle of Cumberland;
His praise in golden lines shall stand,
That maintaines archerie through the land,
As well at York as London,
Whose noble minde so courteously
Acquainted himself with the commonaltie,
To the glorie of his nobilitie;
I will carie the praise to London.

He follows this with a loyal and pious appeal:

God save our queen, and keep our peace,
That our good shooting maie increase,
And prayinge to God let us not cease,
That all oure countrey round about
May have archers good to hit the clout,
Which England cannot be without.

He concludes with an earnest request to her majesty to pay a visit to York, promises to immortalise Essex and others, and desires a listener to

Tell Alderman Maltbie this from me,
In print shall this good shooting be,
As soon as I get to London.

The imprint on this ballad states that it was printed at London, 'neare Holbourne Bridge,' by Richard Jones, 1598.

The following ballad will shew what English archers were capable of doing when engaged in actual combat; it is headed, *A True Relation of the Life and Death of Sir Andrew Barton, a Pyrate and Rover on the Seas*. This view of Barton is, of course, an English one, but the writer does justice to his courage, and, moreover, he does not use the term 'pyrate' in the sense we attach to the word. The imprint states that it was sold at Pye Corner, but is without a date. It begins by saying, that as King Henry VIII. was out hunting, he stood on a mountain, and

Forty merchants he espied,
With fifty sail come towards him.

The object of their coming is explained when they throw themselves on their knees, and complain that they cannot go on their voyage on account of Sir Andrew Barton. On hearing this, the king appealed to those around him to know who will rid him of that Scottish traitor; whereupon Lord Charles Howard volunteered to bring Sir Andrew to England, or be himself taken to Scotland. His offer was accepted, and he lost no time in claiming the assistance of a gunner,

Who was the best in all the realme,
His age was threescore years and ten,
And Peter Simon was his name.

He was further strengthened with the assistance of a Bowman, a Yorkshire gentleman named Horsley, who expressed his willingness to be hanged on the mainmast if he failed to hit a mark the size of a shilling at twelve score yards. Lord Howard sets sail, and meets with a merchant of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who had not long previously had his ship cleared out by the said Andrew Barton. To this man Howard offered three shillings for every penny he had lost if he would guide him to the place where he had been plundered; but the merchant exclaimed :

‘God bless you from his tyranny,
For little you know what man he is;
He is brass within, and Steele without;
His ship most huge, and mighty strong,
With eighteen pieces of ordnance
He carrieth on each side along.’

Eventually, he agreed to guide the English ship to where Sir Andrew was cruising, and as she was sailing by, Barton fired a shot into her middle deck, ‘which cruel shot killed fourteen men.’ Simon responded with a discharge which killed fifteen Scotchmen, and was followed by Henry Hunt, who brought down fifty. Finding he was overmatched, Sir Andrew directed one Gordon and his nephew to go up and loosen sail; but these were killed by Horsley’s arrows.

His men being slain, then up amain
Did this proud pirate climb with speed;
For armour of proof he had put on,
And did not dint of arrows dread.

Horsley managed, however, to find a spot through which he drove an arrow into his heart. The brave Scotchman did not give in even then, but called out :

‘Fight on, fight on, my merry men all;
A little I am hurt, yet not slain;
I’ll but lie down and bleed awhile,
And come and fight with you again.’

They were not to cease firing as long as they heard his whistle; but when this stopped, they stopped too, and the English came aboard. They found eighteen score Scots alive, and as many corpses, and among them that of Sir Andrew. Lord Howard is represented to have cut off his head, and to have returned to England with great joy and rejoicing. On his presenting himself before the king, the latter desired to have Barton brought before him, that he might

pronounce his doom; but Lord Howard did justice to the courage of his foe. ‘You may thank God

And four men in the ship,’ quoth he,
‘That we are safely come ashore,
Sith you never had such an enemy.’

These men were duly rewarded. Lord Howard himself was made Earl Bury; seven shillings were given to every other man; and, what seems a rather remarkable act of generosity on the part of the king, after specifying these rewards, he adds that they were to give

Twelve pence a day to the Scots till they
Come to my brother king’s high land.

This ballad is written in a rough but vigorous style, and is of great length.

There are several ballads in which a king is described as meeting with a plain-speaking individual, who is usually ignorant of the quality of the person with whom he is conversing; but this was not always so. The subject was a popular one, and the extremely long ballad of *The King and Northerman*, which was ‘to be sung to the tune of *Slut*,’ would have taken nearly an evening to sing it. The substance of it ran thus : A north-country lawyer who was the king’s agent wanted to get possession of the countryman’s farm, and pretended that the latter had forfeited his lease. The countryman tried to bribe him by the offer of forty shillings, and subsequently of five marks, but these the lawyer refused, and required him to give up his lease unconditionally, and trust to his kindness. The farmer declined on the ground that he had a wife and family. Acting on the advice of his neighbours, he put the rent in a sack, took his staff, and started for London. When he arrived there, he asked the way to Whitehall; but finding it was then too late to make a business-call on his majesty, he went to bed, to rest himself after the fatigues of his journey, but overslept himself, and to his great vexation was told, when he got to Whitehall, that the king had that morning gone to Windsor. He tells the porter very plainly that he suspects the king may have got an inkling of his presence in town, and what he had come about, and had gone to Windsor to get out of his way. From London he went to the latter place, and at the castle,

Although the gates wide open stood,
He laid on them till he made um crack,

to the great astonishment of the royal porter, who wants to know what he means by making such a noise. He answers that he wants to see the king. The porter replies that his majesty has plenty of servants, and he must tell his business to one of them; but the countryman is much too sharp to do anything of the kind; he has not come all the way from Northumberland to let somebody else do his business at last, and so he tells the porter, to whom he offers a bribe of a penny if he will let him in. The latter pretends he cannot resist so handsome an offer, and goes to a nobleman who is sunning himself in the court, and promises him good sport with a clown, the like of whom has not been seen at court these seven years. The noble orders him to be admitted, but the porter tells him he must leave his dog and stick at the gates. This he refuses to do, on the ground that he is not sufficiently acquainted with the kind of people who surrounded his majesty. Finally, he is introduced to the king, who is engaged in playing a game at bowls, and the weather being hot, he has taken off his coat, and the countryman seeing him so lightly clothed, imagines he has lost the rest at the game, and so, with a slight nod of the head and a beck with the knee, he says :

‘If you be the king,
As I can hardly think ye be,
Heere is a gude fellow that brought me hither,
Is liker to be the king than ye.’

'I am the king,' his grace now said ;
Fellow, let me thy case understand.'

Then he tells how he was the king's tenant, and had been born and bred on the land which the lawyer now sought to deprive him of, on the ground that he had forfeited his lease by cutting down five ash-trees which had been used in building a house on the estate. The king reads his lease, and says :

'I warrant thee thou hadst not forfeited thy lease,
If thou hadst feld five ashes mo.'

To which his tenant replies :

'I, every one can warrant me ;
But all your warrants are not worth a flea,
For he that troubles me, and will not let me go,
Neither cares for warrant of you nor me.'

Eventually, the king gives him two letters to the lawyer, one enjoining him to let the countryman alone, and the other to pay him one hundred pounds. The tenant, in return for his kindness, offers him a shilling, and on the king declining to accept it, he tosses it into his bosom, for which boldness he is gently reproved. He sees reason, however, to regret his liberality, when the king directs his treasurer to bring him twenty pounds.

'If I had thought the king had had so mucle gold,
Beshrew my heart, I'd ha' kept my shillin.'

The first person he meets on reaching home is the lawyer or agent, who wants to know where he has been to, and on the other answering that he had been to the king to get him to settle their difficulty, he does not appear at all astonished that the king should have seen him, but merely exclaims :

'What a deal didst thou then with the king ?
Could not neighbours and friends agree thee and
me ?'

The agent is forced to comply with the king's order, and the ballad concludes :

Would every lawyer were served thus,
From troubling poore men they would cease ;
They'd either shew him good cause why,
Or else they'd let him live in peace.

Another very long performance is *The Lamentable Ballad of the Tragical End of a Gallant Lord and a Virtuous Lady, with the untimely End of their Two Children, wickedly performed by a Heathenish Blackamoor, their Servant, the like never heard of*; and a very lamentable ballad it is, and founded on one of the tales in *Il Decamerone*. In great contrast to this, is a comic ballad, entitled *John and Joan, or a Mad Couple well met*. Loving each other very dearly, they vowed to consult each other's tastes in everything, and the result was rather singular. If he was out of temper and blustered, then she blustered too. If he didn't like this, and cuffed her, she cuffed again. If he were pleased, so was she ; but if he were vexed, and kicked his dog, she immediately kicked her cat. If John broke a pipkin, Joan broke a pot. If John feasted, so did Joan ; and if he sulked over his victuals, she abstained from eating too ; but, as the writer remarks, there was no great harm in this, since they saved their meat. And so it goes on, till they find a change advisable, when John appeals to her thus :

'Henceforth, let's doe in goodnesso,
As we have done in ill ;
I'll doe my best,
Do thou the rest.'
'A match,' quoth Joan ; 'I will.'

In modes of cheating, as in a vast number of other things, how little novelty there is in the processes employed. Here is an ancient ballad describing what happened to a rustic who visited the metropolis. It is headed, *The Countriman's Bill of Charges for Coming up to London*. The first wrong he complains of

was, on alighting at his inn, the barman gave him his pot of beer with an undue allowance of froth. Then he went for a walk, and got his pocket picked. After which he met two men, who declared they were his cousins, and when he expressed his doubts of their assertion, they affirmed that they were, at all events, from his country, and he must take a pot of beer with them. This he consented to do, and while they were drinking it, one of his new acquaintances pulled out a pack of cards. The result I need not add. He meets with sundry other deceptions ; and quits London with a heavy heart, his last grief being, that his horse was almost starved, though he had to pay the landlord as if the animal had been on a full diet of beans.

Of course, the poets did not fail to exercise their wit at the expense of the unfortunate wives. What a taking title this must have been to the village satirist, *Halfe-a-dozen of Good Wives—all for a Penny*. The tune, *The Cleane Contrary Way*. The rustic Henry, who details his experiences with his batch of wives, describes the first as cross and a gossip ; the second, thrifty, so thrifty, that to save the cost of the salt, she would let the meat spoil, and when she went to market, always bought the cheapest, and gave him the worst part first ; the result of this policy being that his appetite was thereby quenched, and the best parts had time to spoil, and had to be thrown away. The third was cleanly, and had good qualities, but she had one little failing ; she invariably got tipsy on Mondays, and only recovered her sobriety on the following Saturday. The fourth was monstrously frugal, and constantly looking after him to see that he did not indulge in any luxury in which she did not participate. The fifth was a good soul, without a fault, old enough to be his grandmother, but he was not happy even with her, for he says :

'Yet if I chanced to kisse,
Or on a young wench look,
You would not think, poore harmlesse soule,
How pitiously she tookt.'

The sixth excelled in scolding all the wives that dwell in Turn-agen-lane.

All the matrimonial complaints seem to come from the husband. *The Cruell Shrow, or the Patient Man's Woe*, declaring the Misery and the Great Paine, by his unquiet Wife he doth dayley sustaine, results in aggravating him into declaring :

If I were now a batchelor,
I'd never have a wife.

According to his account, she indulged in all sorts of luxuries at his expense. She makes him get up and go to his daily work, while she remains snug in bed until 'the chimes doe go at eight.' Then she takes her well-spiced morning-draught, to clear her eyes, after which she places herself before her looking-glass, and spends the rest of the morning

In putting on her brave atyre,
That fine and costly be,
Whilst I wurke hard in durt and mire,
Alacke what remedye.

The consequence of his intruding upon her when she is engaged with her intimates, is serious, but he says, this is nothing to what he gets when they reach home ; she was jesting before, but now she begins in earnest, and to give emphasis to her reproaches—

She takes up a cudgel's end,
And breaks my head full sore,
Then if I chance to heave my hand,
Straightway she'll murder cry,
When judge all men that here doe stand,
In what a case am I.

If a friend calls to drink a pot of beer, she is sure

to pick a quarrel with him. When he sits at meat on holidays, she is sulky and pouts, and—

This is the weary life
That I doe lead, poore harmlesse man,
With my most dogged wife.

Singularly enough, while she will not suffer him to accompany her abroad on her visits, she invariably follows him when he goes out to do business, and 'with her most wicked tongue' she involves him in endless difficulties, till he is driven to exclaim, with what looks like selfishness :

O that some harmlesse, honest man,
Whom death did so befrieff
To take his wife from off his hand
His sorrows for to end,
Would change with me to rid my care,
And take my wife alive,
For his dead wife unto his share,
Then I would hope to thrive.

His expectations of such an event happening are not sanguine, and he concludes his long and piteous narrative :

Take warninge, all men, by the life
That I sustained long,
Be careful how you'll choose a wife,
And so I'll end my song.

This was printed 'by M. P. for Henry Gossou, on London Bridge, neere the Gate.'

The following specimen is one of a kind which was exceedingly popular in the rural districts before the introduction of railways and the rubbish termed Ethiopian songs. It reads dolefully enough; but to thoroughly appreciate its excellence in this respect, it should be heard at a village harvest-home, sung by one of mature age, when he has drunk a sufficient quantity of home-brewed to carry his mind back to the days of his youth. The title of this is *The Complaint of a Lover foreaken of his Love, sung to a pleasant new tune:*

A poore soule sat sighing by a sicamore tree,
O willow, willow, willow,
His hand on his bosom, his head on his knee,
O willow, willow, willow,
O willow, willow, willow,
Sing o' the green willow shall be my garland.

There are several verses in this style, but it will be sufficient if I give the last one :

Farewel faire, falsehearted, plaints end with my breath,
O willow, willow, willow,
Thou dost loth me; I love thee, though cause of my death,
O willow, willow, willow.

Another once popular class of ballads relate the exploits of beggars, whose persistency was equal to that of their successors in Belgravia or Westbournia. Take, as an example of this class, *The Stout Cripple of Cornwall*; wherein is shewed his dissolute Life and deserved Death. This stout cripple had wooden legs, and his home was in a hollow tree by the roadside. During the day, he dozed and begged alternately, and at night he went on the highway, but nobody ever suspected a man of being a highwayman who, it was evident, had not a leg to stand upon. Once hearing that Lord Courtney was to pass along the road with a large sum of money, he got together a number of vagabonds to rob him; but the baron was too well supported, and the stout cripple got the worst of it. He masked his legs on these occasions with a long canvas smock-frock. He continued this career till—

Nine hundred pounds this cripple had got
By begging and thieving, so good was his lot;
A thousand pound he wold make it, he said,
And then he wold give over his trade.

But as he strived his mind to fulfil
In following his actions so lewd and so ill,
At last he was taken the law to suffice,
Condemned and hanged at Exeter size.

Another of this class relates his knaveries, but he combines prudence with the exercise of his profession, and avers that—

'Tis better be a begger,
And sake of kind gode fellowes,
And honestly have
What we doe crave,
Than steale, and goe to the gallows.

As a contrast to the preceding, there are broadsheets filled with moral lessons, or Bible narratives in verse, and with the mention of the title of one of these, *A Hundred Godly Lessons bequeathed by a Dying Mother to her Daughter*, I conclude this notice of a species of literary composition which, according to an oft-quoted statesman, once exercised the most prodigious influence over the nation.

THE WRECK OF THE ORPHEUS.

ALL day, amid the masts and shrouds,
They hung above the wave ;
The sky o'erhead was dark with clouds,
And dark beneath, their grave.
The water leaped against its prey,
Breaking with heavy crash,
And when some slack'ning hands gave way,
They fell with dull, low splash.

Captain and men ne'er thought to swerve ;
The boats went to and fro ;
With cheery face and tranquil nerve,
Each saw his brother go.
Each saw his brother go, and knew,
As night came swiftly on,
That less and less his own chance grew—
Night fell, and hope was gone.

The saved stood on the steamer's deck,
Straining their eyes to see
Their comrades clinging to the wreck
Upon that surging sea.
And still they gazed into the dark,
Till, on their startled ears,
There came from that swift-sinking bark
A sound of gallant cheers.

Again, and yet again it rose ;
Then silence round them fell—
Silence of death, and each man knows
It was a last farewell.
No cry of anguish, no wild shriek
Of men in agony—
No dropping down of watchers weak,
Weary and glad to die ;

But death met with three British cheers—
Cheers of immortal fame ;
For us the choking, blinding tears—
For them a glorious name.
O England, while thy sailor-host
Can live and die like these,
Be thy broad lands or won or lost,
Thou'rt mistress of the seas !

All communications to be addressed to 'The Editors of Chambers's Journal, 47 Paternoster Row, London,' accompanied by postage-stamps, as the return of rejected contributions cannot otherwise be guaranteed.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.